resistant to premature flowering, are recommended for early sowing to enable Jute growers to take in four months remunerative fibre crops in Jute-Paddy + wheat cropping sequence. These varieties are in greater demand in Jute growing states.

2. *Germplasm collection, evaluation and maintenance:*

With the sustained efforts made indegenously & also with the help of International Jute Organisation, the germpalsm pool of jute & allied fibre increased upto 3795. These have been characterised and promising ones are being utilised in breeding programmes.

3. *Development of productive package of cultivation practices & cropping system:*

Productive package of cultivation practices starting from land preparation to the stage of harvest have been evolved, tested & perfected through field experimentations and finally recommended for general adoption to farms of jute growing states.

Jute based cropping system under rainfed, limited & assured irrigation conditions have been recommended. Most profitable cropping sequences recommended for such situations are Jute + Paddy + Paddy, Jute + Paddy + Wheat, Jute + Paddy + Potato/ Mustard/groundnut + Maize, Jute-Greangram/blackgram/soybean.

4. *Disease-Pest management*

Management practices for the control of major pests and diseases have been evolved with minimum use of chemical pesticides to avoid toxic hazards in the area. Hoogly wilt, created a threat to jute cultivation in the Hoogly district of West Bengal. This disease has been managed with the use of cultural (change of cropping system) method.

5. *Retting technoloyg:*

Quality of the fibre is one of the most important factors that determines the permium and level of acceptalslity by the industry. Therefore, the factors affecting retting & quality of jute & mesta have been identified & improved method of conventional pond retting has been recommended. Besides a fibre decorticating machine has been developed in the Institute. Fibres from green plants are extracted using this machine & then put under limited water for retting. Retting period is also reduced by 5-6 days as compared to whole plant conventional retting which takes 12—15 days. The volume of water required for the improved retting is also reduced by 40%. Ribboner, a simple manually operaed mechanical aid to separate bark in the form of ribbon keeping the jute stick intact has also been developed for the benefit of farmers.

6. *Mechanisation:*

The important machineries developed and in use are Single-row and four-row seed drills, wheel hoe, soil crust breaker, mesta plant cutter, fibre decorticators, Ribboner, thresher for jute & mesta seed and scrutching machine for extracting fibre of flax.

7. *Basic Research of economic and stratogic value:*

For the micropropagation of sisal through tissue culture, the technique for the production of plantlets in the laboratory has been standardised.

Jute (drystem) and mesta variety MT 150 (green plant) have been identifed as good soruces for the production of paper pulp.

Health Hazard due to Air Pollution

2624. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that thousands of people are dying because of microscopic pollution in the air;

(b) whether any survey has been carried out by Government in this respect, if so the result thereof; and

(c) the metropolitan cities and the number of people (State-wise) most affected by this type of pollution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD): (a) The Government is not aware of any such reports which arrive at this conclusion.

(b) and (c) Some studies on the impact of air pollution in some cities such as Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Calcutta, have been carried out. The studies indicate that have not indicated any clear cause-and-effect relationship between health effects and air pollution. However, the reports indicate that air pollutants area are associated with a number of health effects such as respiratory disorders, cardiovascular and neuro-behavioural effects, impairmant of liver and kidney functions.

Distribution of items under ICDP

2625. SHRI V. RAJESHWAR R—
DR. SHRIKANT
RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number and value of the Integrated Pest Management Kits, Phenomone traps, NPV, Plant Protection Equipments and Tractor mounted sprayers and sprinkler sets distributed in Nagpur district of Maharashtra under the Intensive Cotton Development Programme;

(b) whether there are complaints that the farmers have not actually received the above;

(c) if so, what steps will be taken to see that the farmers do get these; and

(d) in what manner the distribution of all these is monitored?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) During 1995-96, the following items have been distributed to farmers in Nagpur district of Maharashtra:

Item	Number	Valu (Rs. '000'
i) IPM kits	17	136.0
ii) Pheromone traps	89	22.2
iii) NPV	23	17.2
iv) P.P. equipments	76	110.0
v) Tractor mounted sprayers	100	60.0
vi) Sprinkler sets	17	170.0

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Question does not arise.

(d) Monitoring of distribution at the district level is done by Principal Agriculture Officer and Agriculture Development Officer of respective districts through field staff.

Admission in Delhi University

2626. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether admissions have been refused by Delhi University and its colleges to such admission seekers who had crossed the age of 20 years;

(b) whether students with gap year are also being denied admissions by the University and its colleges;

(c) whether such acts on the part of the University and its colleges have the sanction of any Ordinance or rule passed by the competent authority of the University; and

(d) if so, what is the rationale and justification for denying admissions to the students referred to in (a) and (b)?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) and (b) According to the information furnished by the University of Delhi no student has been denied admission solely on the basis of his/her crossing the age of 20 years Students with gap year have also not been denied admission. The University has even issued specific directions to the